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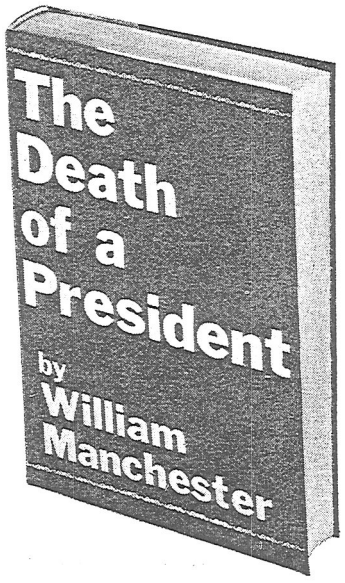
The Story No Other Paper Could Get

Speaking Through Drew Pearson...

JOHNSON TELLS HIS SIDE OF→



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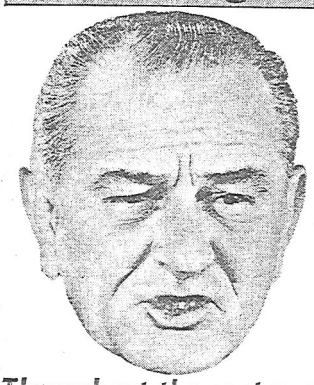
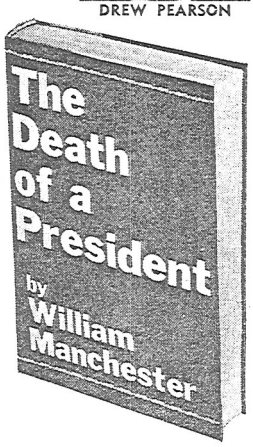


JOHNSON TELLS HIS SIDE OF

DREW PEARSON



Throughout the controversy over "The Death of a President," one key figure has remained silent — President Lyndon B. Johnson. As President, he could not speak out to defend his image against the implications of Manchester's book.

But Drew Pearson decided to write what Johnson was saying privately. And here, exclusively in The ENQUIRER, is the first of Pearson's hard-hitting articles which originally appeared in the West German newsweekly Die Zeit on January 20. It gives this country the first full story of the Kennedy-Johnson "antagonism."

Henri Nannen, editor of the West German magazine STERN — which defied the Kennedys by refusing to censor the serialization of "The Death of a President" — was interviewed recently by The ENQUIRER. Nannen's story of his battle with the Kennedys and LOOK magazine, which lost a lawsuit to force him to make cuts in the manuscript, will appear in a future issue.

During the interview, reporter Curt Wolf asked Nannen: "Do you think Drew Pearson's article was inspired by President Johnson?" Nannen looked at Wolf, raised his right eyebrow, and began to laugh: "Whether I think so? I know it is. Pearson himself told me. He rang me up and said: 'I talked to the President. You understand, in his position he can't very well . . . but he found it was a good idea if I did it.'"

By DREW PEARSON

The controversy over William Manchester's book, "The Death of a President," has focused attention on one of the worst kept secrets in America, the feud between the nation's two top political families and on one of the best kept secrets in America, the friction between Jacqueline Kennedy and her husband, the late President.

NEW PRESIDENT: Lyndon B. Johnson is sworn in as President as his wife and Jackie Kennedy stand at his side during ceremony on the Presidential plane.

The full story of that secret friction between the Kennedys will be told in the next issue. But more important from the point of view of American history, is that the Manchester book and the controversy over it has lined up political leaders and part of the American public in one of two camps — for the Kennedys or for the Johnsons.

There has been some rivalry between them before. But now it's deep and deadly and probably never can be healed. It will affect who becomes the next President of the United States. It will decide whether, if Johnson does not run for reelection, his forces will support Bobby Kennedy for President.

It is exhuming some of the partially buried facts of history, namely that John F. Kennedy, young, virile and charming was not always a wise statesman; that he was responsible for the Bay of Pigs fiasco in Cuba which led to the subsequent missile crisis; that he staged an unwise, untimely showdown with Khrushchev in Vienna which led to the Berlin Wall and a more sharply divided city than ever; and that it was he who put the first American troops into South Vietnam, which has now led to the most serious American war since 1945.

CONSOLATION: President Johnson tries to console Jackie aboard the plane that flew the grieving party and Kennedy's body to Washington.

All this comes at a time when President Johnson had reached the lowest point in his political popularity and when the political pundits were predicting that he would not run again. The controvery over the Manchester book may reverse all this. And it could pull the rug out from under the myth on which Robert F. Kennedy has been riding rapidly to the Presidency.

The crux of the Kennedy-Johnson feud goes back to the belief, held by the Kennedy family, that it was Lyndon B. Johnson, then Vice President, who urged the late President to come to Texas where he met his death. While there is no suspicion that Johnson had anything to do with the as-

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sassination plot, the Kennedys are obsessed with the idea that it was Johnson who advised JFK to take the trip. From carefully researched records in Texas and the White House, however, I have established that this was not the case.

The initiative for the Texas trip came from President Kennedy himself, who as early as August 1961, nine months after his election, told Speaker Sam Rayburn of Texas that he wanted to take a trip to his state. Rayburn demurred, saying that the time was not ripe. Kennedy then asked Rayburn if he would handle the trip after the congressional campaign of 1962, and Rayburn replied that he would.

Speaker Rayburn, however, died on Nov. 16, 1961; so in August 1962, President Kennedy conferred with another Texas congressman, Albert Thomas of Houston, regarding a fund-raising dinner in Houston where the new space agency was being opened. Congressman Thomas worked out the details of the trip, after which the President telephoned Vice President Johnson, who advised him to check with John Connally, Secretary of the Navy, then running for Governor.

Kennedy telephoned Connally, who strongly advised that he not take the trip to Texas until after Connally's own race for governor in November 1962.

After Connally was elected, he received a telephone call from Richard McGuire, the fund raiser for the Democratic National Committee, who again proposed a fund-raising dinner in Texas at which President Kennedy would be present. Connally again demurred. He had rolled up a big campaign debt himself and wanted to pay it off before money was raised by Kennedy to be taken back to the Democratic National Campaign chest in Washington.

At this point President Kennedy telephoned Vice President Johnson who supported Connally and urged Kennedy not to go to Texas in 1962.

In June of 1963, Kennedy once again conferred with Governor Connally and said he wanted to go to Texas. He said that McGuire was breathing down his neck to raise some money from the Texas oil tycoons and suggested that the dinner be held Aug. 27, 1963, which was Lyndon Johnson's birthday. Connally again objected, saying that August 27 was too close to Labor Day and the important people would be away on vacation.

At this point President Kennedy consulted with the Vice President, who backed up Connally and told him that the time was not ripe to go to Texas; it would be better to take the trip in the spring of 1964 as a prelude to his reelection race that year.

During the summer of 1963, however, the President asked Governor Connally to come to Washington where he and Connally agreed that the trip should be made in November of that year. The governor later told Johnson that he still did not want Kennedy to come at that time since he, Connally, still owed money from his election campaign and wasn't enthusiastic about a fund-raising dinner in competition. However, President Kennedy indicated to Connally that since he had appointed Connally Secretary of the Navy he, Connally, owed Kennedy his assistance regarding the trip.

"Don't tell Lyndon," Kennedy is reported saying to Connally. "He'll get his nose out of joint if I come down against his advice."

The Vice President did not learn of the proposed trip to Texas until two weeks before the fateful journey. That was how the trip to Dallas, Tex., which ended in the death of a President, eventually came about.

None of this, however, is published in the Manchester book, and probably few members of the Kennedy family, if any, know of these preliminary conversations. They still blame Johnson indirectly for the death of their President.

The Johnson family in turn will not forget the insinuation of Mrs. Kennedy, as brought out in the original version of the Manchester book, that Lyndon Johnson was boorish, uncouth and unsympathetic in his treatment of her immediately after the assassination and that he rushed in to seize the Presidency almost before her husband's body was cold.

But the Johnson resentment against the Kennedys really goes back much further.

It goes back to the days when he was Vice President — a job which carried few duties except the uncomfortable one of waiting for the President to die — at which time he became the butt of Kennedy humor. None of the humor was ever traced back directly to President Kennedy. But Vice President Johnson was always suspicious of brother Bobby, and the Kennedy White House staff. He attributed to them the newspaper stories aired by columnists close to the Kennedy family that Johnson was a Texas politician out of water and a fifth wheel on the Kennedy wagon.

It is true that Johnson did not belong to the fast-moving jet set which then occupied the White House and that he was unhappy. He has not forgotten that unhappiness or those responsible for spreading the stories about it. And this was probably one reason why he moved with speed to take over the duties of his new office after the assassination in Dallas.

I was in Dallas on the day the tragic event occurred. I have also talked to those who handled the President's body, who traveled back to Washington on the funeral plane, and who saw firsthand some of the events which took place between the new President and the late President's widow.

I had been invited that day to visit the Johnson ranch in Texas and stay all night.

But I believe that I can accurately report the immediate aftermath of the assassination and the friction — because there was friction.

The first friction occurred with the coroner in Dallas. He would not release Kennedy's body to take it back to Washington. He said he had to hold an inquest — even if he was the President. Finally General Godfrey McHugh, Air Force Aide to the late President, persuaded the coroner to release the body, and along with Kenneth O'Donnell, Kennedy's secretary, purchased a casket.

Then occurred an additional complication. Texas authorities objected to the transportation of a casket in an ambulance. Under a city ordinance, it was necessary to get a hearse.

Finally, however, they overcame local red tape and drove Kennedy's body to the waiting airplane, Air Force I, where they removed the back section dividing the bedroom from the rear of the plane and put the casket inside the plane.

By this time, the plane had been waiting an hour for Kennedy's body to arrive. Johnson had reached the plane an hour before, driving through the city of Dallas accompanied by only one person, Mrs. Elizabeth Carpenter, assistant to his wife.

On the way Mrs. Carpenter wrote out a statement for Johnson to make to the public. After reaching the plane, she wrote it in block printing so LBJ could read it.

"They were not my words," Mrs. Carpenter confided. "They were given to me, I think, by divine being. When I got to the plane, I didn't type them. I didn't want to break the silence of that plane by

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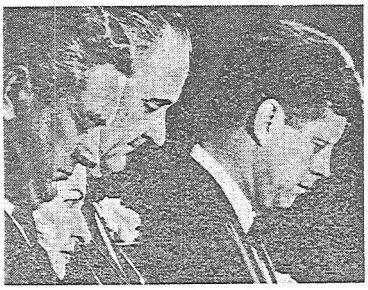
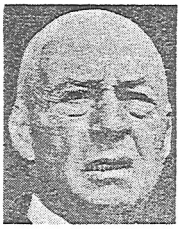
SAD RETURN: Jackie Kennedy and Robert Kennedy watch as JFK's casket is lowered from the Presidential plane to a hearse.

GARDEN TOUR: Mrs. Lyndon Johnson shows the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden to Jackie's mother, Mrs. Hugh Auchincloss.



BOWED IN PRAYER: Hours before assassination, President Kennedy was joined in prayer in Fort Worth, Tex., by Governor John Connally and Vice President Johnson.



SAM RAYBURN
Was against Dallas trip in 1961.

MALCOLM KILDUFF
His remarks caused friction

GOV. CONNALLY
Tried to postpone JFK's arrival

KEN O'DONNELL
His word was law

RED ROSES are placed on JFK's grave by President Johnson as his wife and two daughters look on.

(Continued from preceding page)

touching a typewriter. You felt you were an intruder, though death of course was the intruder."

Immediately upon Johnson's arrival, Emory Roberts of the Secret Service staff wanted to take off for Washington. In the confusion of Kennedy's death, the Secret Service had no idea whether there was a widespread plot and whether an attempt would be made on the new President's life.

Mrs. Kennedy has indicated indignation that Johnson used Air Force I, the official plane of her late husband. She did not realize perhaps that on the plane was secret communications equipment and the Secret Service insisted that he use it and told him the plane must depart.

Johnson replied: "Have you checked this with Kenny O'Donnell?" referring to Kennedy's assistant, who at that moment was helping General McHugh bring the late President's body back to the plane.

Johnson ordered that the plane wait for Kennedy's body. Meanwhile he telephoned Robert F. Kennedy, the Attorney General, to ask for a legal opinion as to whether he, Johnson, should take the oath of office immediately or wait until he got back to Washington.

It was a difficult decision for the brother of the assassinated President to make, and apparently he never made it. But someone in his office did. The new President informed Malcolm Kilduff, the acting assistant in charge of press relations, that he had word back from the Attorney General's office that he should be sworn in aboard the plane in case there was a national emergency while the plane was in the air en route to Washington.

It would take approximately three hours to reach Washington, and the country should not be without a President during that interval.

So the new President sent for Mrs. Sarah Hughes of the United States District Court in Dallas to perform the swearing-in ceremony. At about this point, General McHugh and O'Donnell arrived with Kennedy's body. General McHugh told Kilduff that O'Donnell wanted the plane to take off immediately.

"He may want to take off," Kilduff replied, "but he isn't in charge anymore. Johnson is now President."

This is one of the remarks which caused friction. O'Donnell, who up until an hour or so before had been the closest staff member to Kennedy and whose word was law, bitterly resented it.

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT
How she answered Truman

General Chester V. "Ted" Clifton, the top military aide, then came through the plane to find Johnson. He was seated in the conference room of the plane, usually occupied by the President.

This is a compartment with tables and chairs, able to accommodate about 12 people. It has a telephone by which the President can call Washington and other parts of the world. Johnson was seated there obviously assuming the role of President, another move resented by the Kennedys.

He explained to General Clifton and General McHugh that he had decided to take the oath before leaving Dallas and was waiting for Judge Hughes.

Meanwhile, Captain Cecil Staughton, the Army photographer, had arrived. "I just about killed myself getting through the police lines," he told Mrs. Carpenter. "I knew there'd be a swearing-in, and there must be a photograph of it for the public."

HAPPIER DAYS: Jackie and then Vice President LBJ were on friendly terms when they attended a dinner in Washington more than a year before the assassination.

Judge Hughes arrived.

Mrs. Kennedy was asked to stand with the new President during the ceremony. Her clothes were bloodstained, her hair disheveled. She complied.

Obviously she resented this, and some felt that the President himself should have made the request of her.

The Johnson staff, however, explained that the Secret Service had asked the new President to remain where he was, so he had sent the Secret Service to ask Jackie to come forward for the swearing-in ceremony.

Afterward she went back to the body of her dead husband, where she remained, during the rest of the flight.

The new President and Mrs. Johnson several times asked her to join them, but she refused. Members of the Kennedy staff went back to sit with her from time to time. For the most part she remained alone, disconsolate, grieving.

Various stories have been circulated regarding that tragic flight back to Washington. Mrs. Kennedy is reported as saying she objected to being called "honey" and did not want Johnson near her; that she didn't want "that man to touch me." It was also reported that Johnson had come back to the rear of the plane and smiled on the casket.

According to Kilduff, the new President acted with dignity and sympathy. "My hero was Jack Kennedy," Kilduff told me. "But Johnson acted with nothing except sympathy for a bereaved widow. He took over the situation with precision and dignity. He acted as a strong President must. He ordered certain meetings by telephone, then found people were not in Washington and canceled them.

"He telephoned the late President's mother to tell her of the tragedy and to the late President's brother. These were not easy things to do."

"Did he smile on the plane?" Kilduff was asked.

"He smiled at Mrs. Kennedy," Kilduff replied, "but paternally and in sympathy. He did his best to help Mrs. Kennedy."

When Air Force I, bearing the body of the late President, arrived at Andrews Air Force Base, just outside of Washington, there was some delay in getting a truck hoist to take the casket from the plane.

PAYING HOMAGE: Jackie and her two children, Caroline and John, watch JFK's coffin being wheeled into the Capitol Rotunda. President Johnson and Lady Bird are at right.

SARGENT SHRIVER
Stood up LBJ

PAMELA TURNURE
LBJ kissed her hand

The new President stood in the conference room waiting for the Kennedys to leave. As they were about to leave, Johnson impulsively embraced Mrs. Evelyn Lincoln, Kennedy's secretary, and kissed her.

He took the hand of Pamela Turnure, Mrs. Kennedy's press secretary, and kissed it.

"He felt terribly helpless in saying how sorry he was," Mrs. Carpenter explained. "We all did. So he kissed Mrs. Lincoln." Mrs. Kennedy descended on the truck hoist with the body. The Kennedy staff filed out. Then the Johnson party deplaned.

GENERAL McHUGH
Knew LBJ's plan

Unquestionably Johnson did call Mrs. Kennedy "honey." This is a term of endearment used generally in Texas and in the South. But Johnson, though he may be brusk in politics, is not an unsympathetic person and he did his best to be sympathetic to the stricken widow.

Actually, both the Kennedy and Johnson people were stunned by the tragedy. The plane was silent, each person alone with his thoughts, as it flew back to Washington.

Kilduff, who had remembered such details as getting the newspaper "pool" correspondents aboard the plane in Dallas, broke down and wept once the plane was in the air. It was after the flight back to

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Washington that signs of friction began to develop between the Kennedy and the Johnson families and at first they were not at all discernible to the public.

Mrs. Johnson told Jackie to take her time moving out of the White House. She remained two weeks. During that period she had inscribed on the mantelpiece of the Lincoln bedroom the name of her late husband and the dates of his White House occupancy.

Any changes or inscriptions made to the White House are decisions to be taken by the Fine Arts Commission, not by a President or his widow; and although many Presidents have occupied the Lincoln bedroom, including two who were assassinated, the name of none was placed on the mantelpiece until Mrs. Kennedy took this liberty.

I was in Washington during the tragic day when Franklin Roosevelt died in Warm Springs, Ga., and when Vice President Truman was sworn in as his successor within an hour.

At that time Mrs. Roosevelt, a grieving widow, was asked by the man who had replaced her husband: "What can I do for you."

"The question, Mr. President, is what we can do for you." replied Mrs. Roosevelt. She moved out of the White House the next day.

I dined with the Lyndon Johnsons at their private home one week after he became President, and while they were waiting for Mrs. Kennedy to move out of the White House.

They were in no hurry to have her move. They placed every convenience, every material aid which the White House staff and the Secret Service could offer at her disposal.

But some of Kennedy's staff were full of bitterness against Texas and spoke savagely of their resentment over having a Texan succeed their beloved President.

Ted Sorensen, counsel to the late President, said he wished Texas could be blown off the map. Arthur Schlesinger Jr. said he couldn't bear to hear foreign policy announced with a Texas nasal twang.

The day after his return to Washington, President Johnson sent an aide, Richard Nelson, to the White House for two sheets of Presidential stationery. Snarled a Kennedy aide, "Can't he even wait until the body is cold?"

What Johnson wanted the stationery for was to write longhand letters to the two Kennedy children, Caroline and John Kennedy Jr.

Johnson invited all of the Kennedy staff and their wives, one by one, to confer with him about their future. He asked each to remain. But the bitterness continued.

None of this was known to the outside world and probably the first public indication that the Kennedy family resented the takeover of the Johnsons occurred exactly 30 days after the assassination, on Dec. 22. This was the last day of official mourning and the citizens of the District of Columbia held a final memorial service for the late President at the Lincoln Memorial.

It was a service arranged in part by Protestant and Jewish leaders, both white and Negro, who had not been able to participate in the Catholic ceremony in St. Matthew's Cathedral for JFK.

In Washington there is cordial cooperation between leaders of all faiths, and the memorial service was arranged for at a luncheon given by Archbishop Patrick O'Boyle, at which Jewish and Protestant leaders explained their desires for a nondenominational funeral service.

The Archbishop concurred and gave his complete blessing and cooperation. So did everyone else, except the Kennedy family.

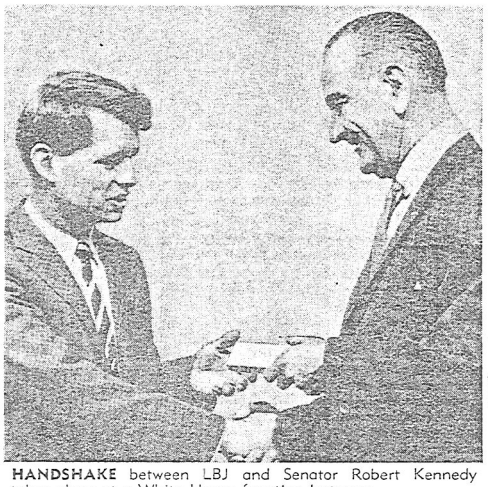
As a member of the memorial service committee, I personally invited Mrs. Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy, Edward F. Kennedy, and Sargent Shriver, their brother-in-law. I urged them to attend. Other leaders of Washington seconded my invitation; even pleaded with them to attend.

None accepted, except Sargent Shriver, who failed to show up. His seat was empty as President Johnson paid an eloquent farewell to John F. Kennedy.

Mrs. Kennedy departed the White House on December 6, going to the Georgetown home of Ambassador W. Averell Harriman, who moved out into a nearby hotel at the request of Bobby Kennedy. Ambassador Harriman is over 70.

His move to a hotel was not entirely convenient,

NEW NAME: Workers lift unfinished sign bearing the new name of Cape Canaveral. LBJ changed the name of the spaceport to Cape Kennedy at Jackie's request.



HANDSHAKE between LBJ and Senator Robert Kennedy takes place at a White House function last year.

but he was delighted to bow to the wishes of the former First Lady.

The Johnsons meanwhile continued the kindergarten for Caroline and John F. Jr. in the White House, and space for Mrs. Kennedy's staff.

Her mail at that time was heavy. And a budget of $50,000 a year was allocated by President Johnson to pay for secretarial services and the salary of Pamela Turnure, Jackie's press secretary.

No other widow of an American President had received an allotment to operate an office in the White House or elsewhere, but Mrs. Kennedy continued to receive $50,000 annually until the 1967 budget when it was cut to $30,000.

But a few weeks ago Jackie was advised to change her image and she canceled the $30,000 allotment.

Former President Truman and former President Eisenhower received no expense allowance for some time, but finally $25,000 a year was voted each by Congress.

In the past the widow of a President has been voted a pension of $10,000 a year which Mrs. Kennedy also receives. She inherited $10 million from her late husband.

TED SORENSEN
Harsh words for Texas

SCHLESINGER
Hated Texas twang

What President Johnson didn't know was that in February 1964, three months after the assassination, the office which he had given Mrs. Kennedy in the White House was used by William Manchester to begin collecting material for the book "The Death of a President."

Nor did President Johnson, I believe, realize for some time the bitterness of the feelings which Mrs. Kennedy held regarding him. Probably he did not realize it until the late spring of 1965, when he and Mrs. Johnson invited Jackie to come to Washington to participate in the dedication of the rose garden just outside the White House, which was named "The Jacqueline B. Kennedy Garden."

It is a beautiful little plot which Mrs. Kennedy had planned with Paul Mellon, son of the late Andrew Mellon, former Secretary of the Treasury.

The dedication ceremony was held on a lovely day in April. Mrs. Kennedy, however, refused to return. The Johnsons sent her a picture of the garden, warmly inscribed. LBJ was a little hurt to find that Mrs. Kennedy had laid it aside on a shelf.

By this time it had become quite apparent that Jackie Kennedy was nursing a grudge. And it made little difference what the Johnsons did to placate or humor her; she continued to nurse that grudge.

Immediately after her husband's death she had asked the new President to change the name of Cape Canaveral in Florida, the historic missile launching site of the U.S., to "Cape Kennedy."

He complied immediately, even though the change caused criticism among local residents. And when Jackie wanted an Air Force jet to fly to a winter vacation in Palm Beach, Fla., she got it, while Mrs. Johnson was struggling with the air shuttle between Washington and New York.

NEXT WEEK: Jackie's feet of clay.

REMOVAL: Workman takes Jackie's belongings from White House a month after assassination.